Proposed Maximum Residue Limit PMRL2010-55

Paraformaldehyde

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Under the authority of the *Pest Control Products Act*, Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) has re-evaluated the human health and environmental risks as well as the value of paraformaldehyde and is proposing continued registration of products containing paraformaldehyde for sale and use in Canada.

Paraformaldehyde is an antimicrobial agent used in alfalfa leafcutting bee (*Megachile rotundata*) production.

The evaluation of available scientific information for paraformaldehyde indicated that the end-use product has value as a sanitizer and disinfectant and does not present unacceptable risks to human health or the environment. Details regarding the re-evaluation can be found in the corresponding Proposed Re-evaluation Decision PRVD2010-10, *Formaldehyde and Paraformaldehyde*.

There are currently no registered food uses for paraformaldehyde. However, a single maximum residue limit[1] (MRL) of 2.0 ppm remains in effect for maple syrup although the last registered product in Canada with paraformaldehyde used as an antimicrobial agent in maple syrup expired on 31 December 1990. Therefore, the established MRL for paraformaldehyde in maple syrup is proposed for revocation.

Consultation on the proposed revocation of the MRL for paraformaldehyde in maple syrup is being conducted via this document (see Next Steps, the last section of this document).

To comply with Canada's international trade obligations, consultation on the proposed revocation is also being conducted internationally by notifying the World Trade Organization, as coordinated by the Standards Council of Canada.

A complete list of all MRLs established in Canada can be found on the Maximum Residue Limits for Pesticides webpage in the Pesticides and Pest Management section of Health Canada's website.

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1 Before registering a pesticide for food use in Canada, the PMRA must determine the quantity of residues that are likely to remain in or on the food when the pesticide is used according to label directions and that such residues will not be a concern to human health. This quantity is then legally established as a maximum residue limit (MRL). An MRL applies to the identified raw agricultural food commodity as well as to any processed food product that contains it, except where separate MRLs are specified for the raw agricultural commodity and a processed product made from it. In the absence of a specified MRL, the 0.1 ppm general MRL applies in accordance with section B.15.002 of the Canadian Food and Drug Regulations.

International Situation and Trade Implications

The revocation of the 2.0 ppm Canadian MRL for paraformaldehyde in maple syrup would be consistent with the current status of American tolerances and Codex MRLs[2] as neither include tolerances/MRLs established for paraformaldehyde on any commodity. American tolerances are listed in the Electronic Code of Federal Regulations, 40 CFR Part 180, by pesticide. A listing of Codex MRLs is available on the Codex Alimentarius Pesticide Residues in Food website.

Comparison of Canadian MRL, American Tolerance and Codex MRL

Common Name	Food	Canadian MRL (ppm)		American Tolerance (ppm)	Codex MRL (ppm)
		Established	Proposed		
Paraformaldehyde	Maple syrup	2.0	Revoke	No tolerances are established (revoked 21 July 1999)	No MRLs are established and none previously revoked

Next Steps

The PMRA invites the public to submit written comments on the proposed revocation of the MRL for paraformaldehyde in maple syrup up to 75 days from the date of publication of this document. Please forward your comments to Publications (see the contact information on the cover page of this document). The PMRA will consider all comments received before making a final decision on the revocation of this MRL.

[2] Codex is an international organization under the auspices of the United Nations that develops international food standards, including MRLs.